

App. No. 09/945321
Office Action Dated June 2, 2004
Amd. Dated October 4, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claims 1-6 and 11-14 are hereby amended. Claim 1 has been amended to recite ceramic materials. Claims 2-6 and 12-14 have been amended editorially. Claim 11 has been amended to depend from new claim 15. New claim 15 tracks claim 1 and recites sintered metals. New claims 16-23 track claims 2-5 and 12-14 respectively and depend from new claim 15. Claims 7-10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-6 and 11-23 are pending.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanton et al. (US 4,851,163). Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection and respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a device for purifying molten glass. A bubble dispenser comprises a porous body with open pores, the porous body comprises a ceramic material selected from silicon carbide, aluminum oxide, silicon dioxide or aluminum silicate.

Claim 15 is directed to a device for purifying molten glass. A bubble dispenser comprises a porous body with open pores, the porous body comprises a metal, selected from tungsten, molybdenum, platinum, iridium or an alloy of these metals.

Stanton teaches an apparatus for treatment of watery media to inhibit organic growth, which tends to clog porous ceramic bodies during treatment. The device is

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essentially a porous ceramic material made using binders such as glass, various minerals such as clays and feldspars and organic materials such as phenolic resins and thermosetting plastics. The porous ceramic material has a thin layer of biocidal material attached to the boundaries of the exposed particles of the ceramic in a shallow layer facing the watery media. The biocidal material is used to preserve the inherent uniformity of distribution of pores and consistency of pore sizes of the ceramic body and to inhibit biofouling. The biocidal material may be metals (eg. copper), metal compounds (eg. copper and gold alloys) or organic polymers. One skilled in the art would readily recognize that extremely high temperatures are necessary for purifying molten glass. The binders and biocidal materials taught by Stanton would be unable to resist the thermal load necessary for a glass melt. Thus, the use of such binders and biocidal materials would result in a contaminated melt and would essentially teach away from the claimed device for purifying molten glass. Stanton fails to teach or suggest a device for purifying molten glass, the ceramic body comprises a ceramic material selected from silicon carbide, aluminum oxide, silicon dioxide or aluminum silicate as required by claim 1 and the ceramic body comprises a sintered metal selected from tungsten, molybdenum, platinum, iridium or an alloy of these metals as required by claim 15. Stanton fails to render claims 1 and 15 obvious. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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Claims 2-6 and 12-14 depend from claim 1 and claims 11 and 16-23 depend from claim 15. For the reasons discussed above for claims 1 and 15, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions or concerns regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, John J. Gresens, Reg. No. 33,112, at (612)371.5265.

Respectfully submitted,

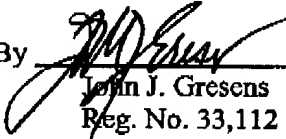
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Dated: October 4, 2004

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By


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